



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
January 26, 2016

CONTACT
Corinne Gould
615-837-5207 or 615-598-1563
corinne.gould@tn.gov

OUTSTANDING FAIRS HONORED AT 94TH ANNUAL CONVENTION

NASHVILLE — Tennessee Department of Agriculture (TDA) Commissioner Julius Johnson recently presented awards to 55 of the top county, regional and state agricultural fairs.

"County fairs are one of the best examples of outreach of agriculture education," Johnson said. "In this day and time, so many people live in urban areas and are not directly connected with farms, farming, and the sources of our wholesome food and fiber."

Fairs were recognized with the Merit Award for outstanding achievement during the 2015 fair season. Nearly 1,000 people attended the recognition celebration during the 94th Annual Convention of the Tennessee Association of Fairs (TAF) held January 21-23, 2016 in Nashville.

The top award went to the Fentress County Agricultural Fair, which was named the Champion of Champions Fair for 2015. The Fentress County Fair was also among the 55 fairs recognized by the TDA and TAF President Ruthie Jeans with the Award of Merit based on agriculture, educational value, overall operations, and the promotion of local interest and community spirit.

Below you will find winners of a few of the primary categories. A full list of winners is attached to this release.

2015 Fair Winners

Division A

State Champion: Benton County Fair
1st Runner-up: White County Fair
2nd Runner-up: Bledsoe County Fair
Most Improved: Smith County Fair

Division AA

State Champion: Middle Tennessee District Fair - Lawrenceburg
1st Runner-up: Warren County Fair
2nd Runner-up: Lincoln County Fair
Most Improved: Franklin County Fair

-More-

Division AAA

State Champion	Anderson County Fair
1 st Runner-up:	Robertson County Fair
2 nd Runner-up:	Wilson County Fair
Most Improved:	Jefferson County Fair

Premiere Awards (selected from among previous winners):

Champion of Champion:	Sequatchie County Fair
Division AA:	Hardin County Fair
Division AAA:	Greene County Fair

Russell Kissel of Kissel Entertainment received the Jimmy Floyd Memorial Award, Cindy Smith with the Fentress County Fair received the first Judy Basse Memorial Award for outstanding fair secretary, and Stan Pitcock of Fayetteville received the Thornton Taylor Award for outstanding dedication to fair programs in Tennessee.

In 2015, almost 3 million visitors attended county, regional, and state fairs in Tennessee. Those fairs generated \$12 million in gross receipts. More than 17,000 volunteers devoted valuable time, resources and efforts to fairs which had more than 120,000 agricultural exhibits and more than 32,000 exhibitors showcasing livestock, farm crops and other agricultural commodities.

The 18th Annual Fair Showcase, a statewide competition held during the convention, consisted of 384 entries from 36 fairs. Fairs competed for prize money and awards in 39 different categories including best fair catalog, website and educational displays, promotional videos, posters, scrapbooks, creative ideas and free-standing and table-top exhibits.

For 2016 fair dates and other fair information, visit www.tnfairs.com.

(Additional winners attached)

###